What is claimed is:

5

10

20

1. A method of tracking an object comprising: providing a plurality of cameras; determining an image from each camera; determining a common plane in the images; determining a parallax for scene points across the images; incorporating the parallax as a feature in a background model; and

estimating a change in the scene using the background model.

- 2. The method of claim 1, wherein at least one camera is a pan-tilt-zoom camera.
- 15 3. The method of claim 1, wherein at least one camera is uncalibrated.
 - 4. The method of claim 2, further comprising: providing a pan-tilt-zoom camera;
 - determining a mosaic for the pan-tilt-zoom camera from images captured from the pan-tilt-zoom camera; and

registering the mosaic and the images from the pan-tilt-zoom camera and the plurality of cameras according to a common plane in the scene.

5. The method of claim 2, further comprising inter-frame registration of images captured from the pan-tilt-zoom camera.

5

15

- 6. The method of claim 1, wherein the background model comprises a feature.
- 7. The method of claim 6, wherein the feature is one of an intensity and an edge.
 - 8. The method of claim 1, further comprising determining the background model by one of a mixture-of-Gaussians and a non-parametric kernel.
 - 9. The method of claim 1, further comprising determining a change according to the background model.
- 10. The method of claim 1, further comprising obtaining a height from the parallax that is invariant to the motion of the object through the scene.
 - 11. The method of claim 1, further comprising providing a

control strategy for controlling the cameras such that a probability of the object being visible in a next image is maximized.

- The method of claim 8, wherein an error associated with object detection and velocity is propagated to determine a maximum possible zoom at which an image of the desired region of the object may be acquired.
- 13. The method of claim 1, further comprising obtaining a relationship between observations from different cameras via a homography relationship for the common registered plane.
- 14. The method of claim 1, further comprising providing a
 control strategy for acquiring user defined relevant information
 for a plurality number of objects in a scene.
 - 15. The method of claim 14, wherein providing the control strategy further comprises:
- providing a probability density function for the object;

providing a model for object motion.

16. The method of claim 14, wherein providing the control

strategy further comprises providing a user specification.

- 17. The method of claim 16, further comprising controlling the cameras according to the user specification and the change in the scene.
- 18. A system for tracking an object, comprising: two or more cameras;

5

15

- a registration module for aligning a common plane in an image obtained from each camera;
 - a parallax module for determining a parallax between views of each camera; and
 - a detection module for determining an object in a scene defined by the views of the cameras according to the parallax and a predetermined background model.
 - 19. The system of claim 18, wherein the parallax is determined between views of two cameras.
- 20 20. The system of claim 18, wherein at least one camera is uncalibrated.
 - 21. The system of claim 18, wherein at least one camera is a pan-tilt-zoom camera.

- 22. The system of claim 20, further comprising control strategy means for tracking the object with the pan-tilt-zoom camera.
- 23. A program storage device readable by machine, tangibly embodying a program of instructions executable by the machine to perform method steps for tracking an object, the method steps comprising:

providing a plurality of cameras;

determining an image from each camera;

determining a common plane in the images;

determining a parallax for scene points across the images;

incorporating the parallax as a feature in a background

model; and

estimating a change in the scene using the background model.

15